THE New Republic

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by Geoffrey Wagner

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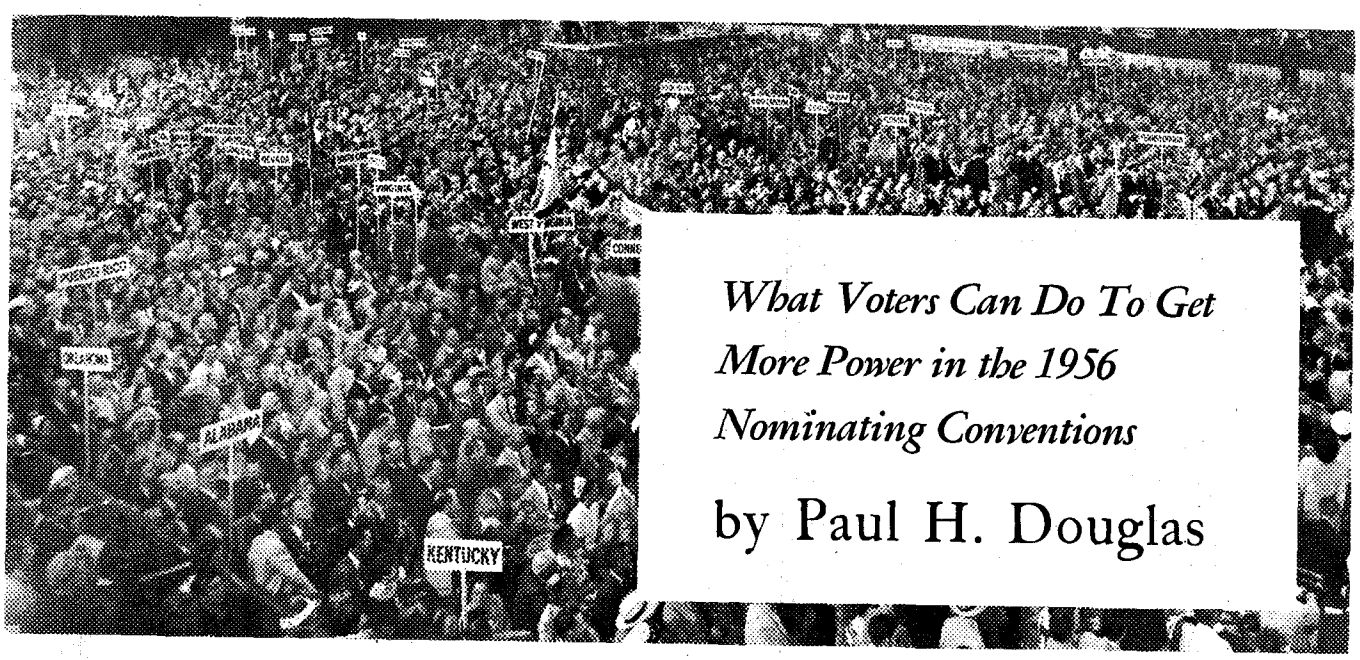
Go, Thou, and Do Differently

by Richard L. Neuberger



What Voters Can Do To Get More Power in the 1956 Nominating Conventions

by Paul H. Douglas

MARCH 28, 1955

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Washington Wire .... *T.R.B.*

Eisenhower has dedicated himself, as we understand it, to trying to modernize the GOP. He was genuinely astonished to discover in two big elections that the public trusts him, not his party. His trouble comes in trying to correct this; he is not really interested in politics and can't, or won't, carry the backbreaking Presidential load of details. So he takes his cue from Vice-President Nixon or George Humphrey, or just isn't consulted, as about the release of the Yalta papers by Dulles.

Last week, in a letter to party workers at Los Angeles, Ike heaped on Nixon the most glowing praise he has ever accorded him. In view of Nixon's controversial role in the 1954 election this build-up was surprising. Many think Ike is looking to Nixon in 1960. And many think this is an example of Ike's "bad ear" in politics.

Eisenhower echoed at his press conference Humphrey's charge that the Fulbright Stock-Market Investigating Committee might destroy "confidence" in the economy. Washington is getting used to this echo—the White House is famous for echoes particularly in GOP Administrations. We used to get a similar echo under Harding and Coolidge when Mellon was Secretary of the Treasury. We confess our jaw dropped when we heard Humphrey tell the Fulbright Committee that public confidence in the national economy "can be lost in a day." We have always taken a rather suspicious view of the post 1953-54 recession recovery (which has now won back almost 50 percent of its drop) but we were never as gloomy as Humphrey suggests he is. In these matters we are governed by the *Wall Street Journal*: in its March 16 issue a writer explains at length the long "calculated campaign" of mass hypnosis by the Administration to halt public fears by "a series of confidence-boosting pronouncements," proclaiming "that the economy was 'basically sound'." It is hard to believe that Humphrey is as scared as his remark implies. Heads of stock exchanges, financial experts, trade association chairmen have almost universally praised the discreet Fulbright inquiry, but now it is under official attack by the GOP, led by Republican Chairman Hall and Secretary Humphrey, seconded by Sen. Homer Capehart (R, Ind.) and with the full assistance of the White House.

The third development was the publication of the Yalta papers. If we are correct, this played right into the hands of the GOP right-wing, the very group Ike is trying to curb to modernize the Republican Party. The GOP 1952 platform pledged the party to "repudiate" Yalta. Dulles was the principal author of the foreign-policy plank. Ike endorsed the repudiation in a Denver campaign speech Oct. 11, 1952. It is characteristic of Ike's present role that Jim Hagerty, his press secretary, said the President did not know the papers were being published. The papers were published, of course, for political reasons. One could sadly wish, as an American, that the world's most powerful nation could do these things with a little more style and dignity. The devious Dulles first proposed to send 24 copies for "confidential" examination on Capitol Hill, knowing full well that they would be leaked to the press. Democrats spurned that trap. Then the documents were leaked anyway. Once it was ascertained that the *New York Times* had them, Dulles used this as an excuse to give them to everybody. GOP advantage at home was put ahead of American loss abroad.

Politics is politics, and we cannot be as indignant over the affair as some. It's not the first time American aims abroad have been betrayed by politicians at home. The discouraging thing is the way it helps the GOP Old Guard, which is really the anti-Eisenhower wing of the party. Sen. Everett Dirksen (Ill.), the *Chicago Tribune*, Senator Knowland and others are gloating over the affair; it heartens supporters of the Bricker Amendment to have another go, it exacerbates Democrats over foreign affairs, and it comes, worse luck, just when three major pieces of foreign-policy legislation are pending.

Ike has probably lost the tariff battle. Speaker Rayburn rescued him on this issue in the House with Democratic votes; but the Senate will probably water the bill down so that it doesn't mean much. Ike's passive attitude is really astonishing. He has called the Reciprocal Trade Act extension the foundation of his program, but he isn't lifting his hand for it. If he threw himself into the fray as he did over the $20 tax issue, his immense popularity would probably win a victory. So far he hasn't moved.

The second foreign affairs issue is GATT. After four months of negotiations with 33 nations at Geneva our representatives have agreed to a new world policeman organization to set up and supervise fair trade between Western nations. The GOP Old Guard will certainly fight this tooth and nail. Prospects are doubtful. It will collapse if the US doesn't ratify.

Finally comes the Administration's watered-down Asian aid program. Congress will pass something, just as it will pass some kind of a "compromise" tariff extension act. The question is how much?

Democrats made a play for the "little man" vote in their income-tax cut proposal; now they will try again on the farm bill. Pro-labor representatives who want a higher federal minimum wage are going to swap votes with the farm bloc which wants rigid farm-price supports, at 90 percent of parity. It's difficult in instances like this to disentangle what is simple political cynicism from what is genuine feeling for consumers under a big business administration.

Notes: Douglas Aircraft security director Fitzsimmons tells of an employee barred from work on a "vital" jet starting device as a security risk; the man had invented the device, Fitzsimmons says. . . . Ike has so many millionaires in his Cabinet that the addition of a practicing politician, like Harold Stassen, should be quite helpful; Stassen is an internationalist and thinks in terms of Congress and voters. . . . Ex-Sen. Harry Cain is taking such a strong stand for civil rights now he's out of Congress that it's argued other conservative Republicans should be defeated to give them the same chance.

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BEHIND THE HEADLINES

Theirs Not to Question Why, Just Buy

THE SENATE stock-market investigation has turned from a financial inquiry into a political dog fight. Republicans on the Fulbright Committee except for the ranking member, Sen. Homer Capehart (R, Ind.), have boycotted the hearings.

Capehart, under the guidance of Treasury Secretary George Humphrey, has devoted himself to trying to show that the investigation is "nothing but a scheme to destroy confidence."

Chairman William Fulbright (Ark.) has vainly argued that "the Republicans have the most to gain from this study." If it should result in correcting an unhealthy boom, the credit, he points out, "will redound to the President rather than to us [Democrats]." Every witness except Humphrey has praised the committee for warning against excessive stock speculation. The financial editor of the *New York Times* even stated that such an inquiry in 1928 might have softened the effect of the 1929 crash. But, encouraged by Humphrey, Capehart has insisted on trying to equate confidence in the stock market with confidence in the Eisenhower Administration.

The injection of politics into the study has made any final report of the investigating committee "almost futile," Fulbright says, because of the partisan label that now will be placed upon it. Financial experts who followed the daily proceedings, however, say that three gains have already been achieved:

1. After the initial shake-out, which many welcomed as a technical correction to an overbought market situation, the investment market has seemed to right itself and was probably strengthened by this process.

2. The discussion of the effect of the capital-gains tax should have debunked the arguments that this was an inequitable tax or that it had any appreciable effect upon the inflating of capital values.

3. The conspicuous advance in the prices of stocks of aircraft manufacturers and other government contracting companies, brought out in the hearings, drew attention to the fact that the Renegotiation Act had been allowed to lapse on December 31, 1954. The Administration had not requested the renewal of the law which permits the re-examination of contracts and the recovery by the government of exorbitant profits on defense contracts. On March 4 Eisenhower finally asked that the Act be extended for two more years. The case for tighter administration of the renegotiation law was also strengthened thereby.

The Liberals Debate

THE EIGHTH annual convention of the Americans for Democratic Action, held in Washington, D. C., March 18-20, was most distinguished by the fact that a national liberal organization that is "neither a party nor part of a political party" has been able to celebrate an eighth anniversary. The ADA sprang into existence in 1947 almost as an *ad hoc* committee of variegated progressives to resist the conservative trends then rising in the Democratic Party and to explode the myth of the Wallace Progressive Party, then popular in some liberal ranks. That the ADA has been able to stay in business for eight years is a tribute and a tribulation: a tribute to the maturity of its liberal components who have been able to maintain an effective coalition of progressive forces; and a tribulation for its leadership, who are eager to spell out ADA's role under changing conditions from year to year.

In a fairly unusual attempt at re-examination of its purposes, ADA concluded this year that its big job in 1955 was to "cut through the complacency and the apathy that have paralyzed us [America] in the face of danger." This theme was picked up in all commissions and in all statements: both the Domestic Policy Commission and the International Policy Commission dug for new programs to meet new times. The new National Chairman of ADA, Joseph Rauh, announced ADA's core policy as critical independence *vis-à-vis* both Republican and Democratic Parties.

In agreement almost unanimously on about 95 percent of its program, ADA did find debate within its ranks on the optimum point in the balance between national security and individual freedom. Key decisions resolved that "the Communist Party is a conspiracy toward that end [espionage and sabotage]"; voted down a proposal stating that "membership in any organization" should not be automatic grounds for disqualifying a teacher; agreed to "oppose limiting the right to advocate unpopular political proposals," but struck out a clause adding "including Communist ideas." In short, the ADA sought a maximum of freedom without any delusions as to the fundamentally conspiratorial character of the Communist Party.

First things first

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Although debate centered around such matters, the emphasis of the Convention was on the attempt to sound the alarm about coming crises, domestic and international, to articulate a program to head off these disasters, and to shake Washington out of its legislative lethargy.

The Rubber Barons Have Both Hands Out

ON MARCH 25, unless Congress intervenes, this country's synthetic rubber industry will pass from public to private ownership. Twenty-four plants, constructed by the government during the rubberless years of World War II, and currently netting a profit of about $60 million annually (no federal taxes), will be sold to the big four rubber companies (Goodyear, Goodrich, US Rubber, Firestone), two combines of smaller concerns, and two major oil companies (Shell and Phillips) for $285,465,000.

While You Weren't Looking

Transacted under the principle of the Rubber Act of 1948—that a "free, competitive synthetic-rubber industry" would "strengthen national security"—the sale has been recommended by both Truman and Eisenhower as "in the national interest." In 1953, Congress passed the Rubber Producing Facilities Disposal Act, creating a Commission to conduct competitive bidding and present all proposals to Congress for final review.

The chief criteria for disposal were: procurement of a "fair share" of rubber by "small business" at "fair prices"; purchasers with the "technical competence" for operating a rubber plant; development of a "free, competitive, synthetic-rubber industry"; a "full fair value" price; and protection of national security.

Press comment on the commission's proposals has been restricted to an occasional two or three inches on inner pages. Congressional criticism of the Commission's proposals, which has mounted slowly since January 27 when the disposal plan was submitted for review, centers both on the whole plan and one of its parts.

The part, a package sale of three plants to Shell Oil Company is opposed by the unsuccessful bidders (especially Edwin Pauley and Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company) as illegal under the rule that each bid "shall contain . . . the amount proposed to be paid for each facility." (Shell refused to divide its bid, insisting it would only buy the three plants together. Bills to block this purchase were filed by Sens. Edward Thye (R, Minn.) and Hubert Humphrey (D, Minn.) and Rep. Clyde Doyle (D, Cal.).

Opposition to the plan as a whole is headed in the House by the Small Business Committee, under the leadership of Reps. Sid Yates (D, Ill.) and Wright Patman (D, Tex.), and in the Senate by Democrats Wayne Morse (Ore.), Paul Douglas (Ill.), John Sparkman (Ala.), Herbert Lehman (N.Y.). Bidding, they contend, was not competitive; 17 plants had only one offer each, and most of these were from companies now operating the facilities for the government. The purchase price, although higher than under previous disposals, is not "full fair value": at a reasonable capitalization of 10 percent on expected earnings, a fair price would be $350-$400 million—not $285 million. Rather than establishing a "free, competitive" industry, the sale will further entrench dominant rubber and oil interests: all of the single buyers, and certain of the companies in the two combines, have a long history of combination and conspiracy in restraint of trade. Small business has no guarantees that the contracts will insure it a fair share of rubber at a fair price.

Violations of these four main principles would necessitate complex court action by the government, relief from which would come too late to prevent bankruptcy.

Finally, there is added concern about this sale at a time when natural rubber supplies are threatened by the situation in the Far East, as well as about the contract's lack of a recapture clause should such an emergency occur.

The paramount issue, in short, is not whether the government shall remove itself from proprietary enterprises, but whether decisions about a public trust shall be consistent with the general welfare.

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Democratic Stutter

DEMOCRATIC PARTY leaders, who bragged the day after election that they would put the President's trade program through Congress, will soon have very red faces unless they start policing their own ranks.

The first defection was in the House, where the Pennsylvania Democratic delegation, with the exception of three, deserted their leadership en masse under the "whip" of the Democratic party whip for that area, Gus Kelly, who evidently responds more to John L. Lewis and the high-tariff coal industry than to his party. These Democrats included even the Philadelphia Congressmen, whose city is America's second port, and

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whose constituents' economic interest—manufacturing, shipping, *et al.*—quite evidently is on the side of more world trade.

Coal and textile management, to conceal their own failures to meet changing technologies, consumer management, to conceal their own failures to meet changing technologies, consumer demand, etc., have long been beating that old devil foreign competition over the head. But lately labor leaders have also taken that easy out.

If the Neely Amendment to the Trade Act is passed, practically embargoing residual fuel oil, the unemployed coal miners whose leaders support the Amendment will have been used as cats' paws to put natural gas in factories which burned residual oil. One thing is sure—very few will reconvert to coal.

Southern textile workers are being frightened by mill operators (ably abetted by the Tariff League) into a state of panic over the possibility of lay-offs because of the Japanese Trade Agreement negotiations—and Southern Senators and Congressmen are responding to that pressure, when the overwhelming interests of the South are still in exports. (Last week 54 Senators in a letter to Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson, demanded a positive program to recapture a "fair share" of the world cotton market. Many of the Senators who signed the letter to Benson had previously joined with Senator Neely in his amendment to limit imports drastically.)

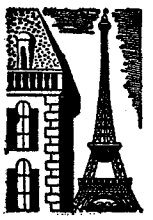
Even the textile industry itself stands to gain more from exports than it could lose from import competition. The near defeat of the trade program in the House encouraged the protectionists to double their lobby effort in the Senate. And unfortunately, the Democrats haven't the stalwarts there in Senators Johnson and Byrd they had in the House, with Sam Rayburn and Jere Cooper.

For their own reasons, even such international-minded Democrats as Barkley, Fulbright, Morse, Monroney, and Lehman have expressed doubts or reservations about renewing the law without change. And there is no sign of a Democratic leader ready to suggest a real solution to the sick coal and textile industries—instead of giving in to the scare tactics of the worst enemies of the Democratic Party.

Why France Will Enter the H-Bomb Race

PREMIER EDGAR FAURE'S statement on the reason for France's probably forthcoming decision to make H-bombs of its own tells only part of the story:

> If things continue to go as they are now going, there will be a kind of line of demarcation between the noble and powerful nations which have thermonuclear means of action and the inferior nations which lack them. It is not yet decided whether France will embark more vigorously on the course [of making H-bombs of her own] or whether she will foresee a formula of European organization to facilitate such progress. The government will give serious consideration to the matter: France cannot remain in the category of second-rate great powers.



France has had, for some time, the knowledge, the technical skills, the facilities, the equipment, the funds, in fact everything intellectually and materially necessary to make H-bombs. What has been lacking—in the highest scientific circles, in the government and in public opinion—has been the desire and the will to make them. In addition, there have been—and are—strong influences at work against making them.

What Premier Faure's statement failed to make clear is that the debate on the subject which is going on in the government started well before the British decision. As a matter of fact, the subject came up for serious consideration during the period of office of Mendès-France, and his intense interest in an all-West European arms pool (excluding the British) was closely connected with it. What Faure also failed to say or suggest is that the French expect the West Germans to start making the H-bombs—if they have not already begun the necessary research. The self-denying promises of Chancellor Konrad Adenauer inspire no confidence. On the contrary, the French believe that the Germans will have—or already have—access to certain types of help in this direction from the US.

Sir Winston said in Commons that "the 12 German divisions are a symbol rather than a physical factor" and that their real purpose "is ranging all the mighty German race and nation with the free world." It will take four years before these "symbolic" divisions can be fully trained and armed. Before the end of that interval of time, the Soviet East may well have come abreast of—if not ahead of—the free West in the development of thermonuclear weapons. Moreover, it is only a matter of a short time before West Germany is accorded an equal place with France in any negotiations with the East.

The French don't consider it reasonable to assume that "the mighty German race and nation" will be content to occupy that place with symbolic divisions still far from even nominal effectiveness. The decision of the French to make H-bombs, when it comes, will not, therefore, be made on the basis of scientific or military considerations; it will be political. Its purpose will not be merely to fill "the empty chair" at the table of the great powers; it will be to fill better and faster a place equal to West Germany's.

The manufacture of superbombs in France will take at least three years—barring unforeseen "progress." Then, perhaps a half-dozen bombs will be ready—obviously an inconsequential number compared with the stocks in the US, Soviet Russia and, probably, in Great Britain. Nevertheless, the hope of the French who are pressing Premier Faure toward an affirmative decision is that, politically, the decision itself will keep France ahead in the race against West Germany; and that, again politically, the handful of bombs three years hence may serve a similar purpose, if the Germans are late in starting. Finally, the dominant factor may be the influence of the growing number of highly placed Frenchmen who believe that the quarrel about WEU is out of date and that the primary goal of France should be to give an intelligent lead toward atomic disarmament.

The most interesting, and important, phrase in Faure's statement is the reference to a formula of European organization. That picks up, in a larger context, Mendès-France's notion of the arms pool. It means, in substance, that France will not provide herself with thermonuclear weapons *nationally* if she gets dependable assurance that West Germany will not be allowed to do so.

Paris FRANK GORRELL

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Asia Meets Africa

"COLONIALISM" will top the agenda of the Afro-Asian conference at Bandoeng, Indonesia, in April. And it is likely to catch the West off balance again. The argument that Western colonialism is on its last legs, but that the Communist variety, masquerading as a liberating influence, is on the ascendancy and is therefore more dangerous does not carry conviction to the Asian mind. Given the hard realities of the West's imperial past and arrogant present, Asian and African countries struggling to free themselves from the colonial yoke feel justified in overlooking the prospect that Soviet "satellitehood" might overtake them in the future.

Today, Britain is fighting miniature wars on three continents to avoid losing control of 35 colonies. Nearly 80 million people are under French colonial rule, minus those in the recently freed Indo-China States. Portugal is seeking NATO intervention to stem the tide of popular movement for the liberation of its tiny settlements on Indian soil. Holland is sticking to West New Guinea, offsetting the graceful manner in which she quit the main Indonesian islands, while Australia is making confusion worse confounded by laying claim to West Irian in Indonesia. Belgium and Spain are also ordering the waves to stop.

Happily, the United States is guiltless in this respect. The way Washington freed the Philippines is often held up as a model for the metropolitan Powers by the colonial people. But, fearing to champion the cause of freedom for colonies because that might displease its Western allies and impair the Western defense system, America has been siding with the Colonial Powers. The West New Guinea issue at the United Nations was an instance in point. Policymakers in America more and more are taken by the argument that to withdraw the "protecting arm" of colonialism is to make African and Asian countries more vulnerable to Communist conquest. To the colonial peoples that argument is nonsense.

The result is a growing gulf between America on one hand and the Asian and African States on the other. Asian opinion also traces the American apathy toward the struggles of colonial peoples to the fact that the United States has scores of bases in these territories. So they charge the United States with a vested interest in the decaying empires. And it is here that Communist propaganda, arguing that anti-Communist defense measures like SEATO are really the second line of defense of colonialism, steps in. At the forthcoming Asian-African conference, China will spare no pains to drive home this point. She will also extend the definition of colonialism to fit the queer case of Formosa. What West Irian is to Indonesia and Goa, Diu and Daman to India, Formosa is to Peking—that will be China's line.

Given a change of attitude on the colonial question, one stressing sympathy for the legitimate national aspirations of millions of Asian and African people, the US can justifiably speak of the right of self-determination of the Formosan people; for the Communists are not interested in giving freedom to the Formosans. Thus could the Asian public be brought face to face with the Communist variety of colonialism.

Kamma Communist Leaders: the Humbled Red Landlords of Andhra

Another Look at Communist Power in Andhra

A RED danger signal has flashed in final returns from the Southeast Indian state of Andhra, where Prime Minister Nehru's forces scored an upset election victory over the Communists last month. Although disastrously outpoliticked (*NR*, March 15), Andhra's Communists polled more than 30 percent of the popular vote. This does not alter Nehru's 146-15 margin in the state legislature, but it is a clear warning for the future.

Pro-Nehru Indian newspapers looked squarely at the facts this week and decided that election-time *realpolitik* was not enough to finish the Communists in Andhra or anywhere else. Calling for a "bold socialist legislative program," the influential *Times of India* (Bombay and New Delhi) declared that Nehru's Congress Party "will be woefully mistaken if it sees in the election results a complete vindication of its record. The shift in public opinion has by no means been as violent as the change in the party position in the state assembly."

The venerable *Hindu of Madras*, noting the narrow margin of victory over the Communists in many constituencies, added that "Congress leaders will hardly underrate the threat to peace and progress that the Communist Party . . . is still potentially capable of offering."

Paradoxically, the Andhra Communists polled twice as many votes (2,695,562) in their hour of defeat as in that happier 1951 showing (1,208,656) which gave them enough seats to hound a Congress state cabinet out of office. In the 1951 elections, independent India's first, Andhra was a jungle of warring factions. More than 600 candidates roamed the field. The Communists concentrated in their strongholds, running only 61 candidates. They elected 41 deputies, mostly in districts where the opposition vote was divided. This time, plainly overreaching themselves, the Communists entered 159 races. Nehru's lieutenant pressured Andhra's non-Communist factions into unity against the common foe. The resultant straight fights produced a humiliating decline in Communist power in the state legislature. But with 30 percent of the voters behind them, the Communists will have another kind of power, a friendly public opinion, as they air popular grievances against Nehru's ruling coalition in the state. The fact that their support, more dispersed than four years ago, failed to produce majorities in the constituencies, hardly writes finis to the potential of the Andhra Communists for serious political mischief.

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Faith in Persons And in Authority

ON MARCH 18, Harry P. Cain, Republican Senator from Washington, 1946-1952, and since then a member of the Subversive Activities Control Board, addressed the 7th Conference on Civil Liberties. Following are a few excerpts from his analysis of problems raised by the federal security program.

. . . IF THE world of the present comes tumbling down, as it has the power now for so doing, those who remain alive must begin to build another home for the living from the ruins. The only possible tools to be in our hands in the beginning will be our courage and self-respect, and a hoped for mutual trust among Americans. . . .

Unless we remain enthusiastic about being Americans; unless we have confidence in our government, we aren't likely to see any universal peace established and we aren't going to win any war which may engage us.

If this be so, we ought to re-examine the status of our enthusiasm and the degree of confidence we hold for those in authority. . . .

For the present, millions of citizens . . . have become bewildered and troubled by the contradictions between stated purposes and administrative results. . . .

Had you chosen recently between being indicted for a capital or infamous crime or being held to be a loyalty risk, there would have been no choice to make. From the indictment, you would have been found guilty or acquitted; sentenced or released through language and methods everyone can understand. From the allegation that you were a loyalty or security risk, you might have long wallowed in the wilderness of despair and mental torment without determining what the charges were all about, or where they came from. Please note my use of the tense. Future consequences from recent refinements in the Employees Security Program remain to be seen. . . .

If an ambition is to achieve uniform and consistent standards and procedures throughout the federal structure, I can think of no sounder way to approach the problem than through a detached and distinguished non-partisan commission of some sort. . . .

In utter sincerity, I do maintain that political considerations in security questions have been the major source of our discontent and diminishing confidence in authority since the close of World War II.

There is no reason to say that one political party has been more responsible for this mischief than the other. National campaigns have revolved around who was going to do what to whom in these fields. There has been no agency within the several Administrations and few individuals who have been considered to be disinterested and objectively-minded. The charge and counter-charge are the weapons employed by partisan minds everywhere. One party is maligned for having attempted too little and the other party is criticized for having attempted too much. Republican and Democratic Party supporters mostly restrict their views to what their articulate spokesmen say. The independent voter picks and chooses from competing headlines.

A commission would have a far better chance of having its judgments considered on their merits. Much of what is good today is disregarded, held suspect, or neglected because it is written off as being politically inspired. The commission could stop most of this. It would, I think, place the greater emphasis on what rather than who is right and best for the Nation in the complicated equations which are the ingredients in the realm of internal security. . . .

Regardless of who future managers are to be, there remains much to be thought about. . . .

Every applicant for the federal service and every employee within that service has been required to state whether he is currently or has ever been a member of any organization listed by the Attorney General.

Is it not proper to explore the desirability of eliminating that portion of the question which relates to memberships which were resigned or renounced or which lapsed prior to the listing which was first made public in 1947?

If an individual's conduct, attainments and attitudes have been above reproach during the past eight years, or since 1947, is it not a legitimate calculated risk to assume that he had been a loyal citizen during the years which went before? . . .

THE Attorney General's list ought, in my judgment, to be liquidated through procedures which our country supports. The merits of the charges against any listed organization should be adjudicated. Sanctions should apply to those who remain as members after an organization has been found to be guilty as alleged by the Attorney General. . . . In my opinion, no organization should be listed unless it is simultaneously announced that prosecution will be initiated in the case within a period of several months. . . .

The complete measure of a government, like that of an individual, can only be judged by the fashion in which it assumes and fulfills its unenforceable obligations. . . .

We expect and pray that our government will be just in its treatment of every citizen not because the laws of our land so require in every instance, for they do not, but because that government wants and will remain determined to be just.

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"Go, Thou, and Do Differently"

by Richard L. Neuberger

IN THE name of anti-Communism, the ultimate in subservience to *Pravda* and the *Daily Worker* has now been proposed. Briefly summarized, the new doctrine runs like this—whatever the Communists are against, we must be for; whatever the Communists are for, we perforce must be against.

It was all that simple when one of my distinguished colleagues recently addressed the Women's Auxiliary of the Medical Society of the District of Columbia. The speech of Sen. Karl E. Mundt (R, S.D.) was thus described in the *Washington Evening Star*:

> In considering public issues, he said it would be a good idea to find out what the Communists favor. "If they take a unanimous stand for anything" [he suggested] "it would be a pretty good rule to be against it —even if it does have some good features."

This counsel from a high place has some pretty alarming aspects, no matter how you look at it. To begin with, I discard the qualifying word "unanimous." Communists are always unanimous, else they are liquidated in Russia or banished from the Party in the United States. It is the nature of the beast.

One of the policies referred to in Senator Mundt's address was public power. I presume Communists favor public power, unanimously. Nearly all that I know about public power I learned from two illustrious Republican Senators who took an interest in my career—George W. Norris of Nebraska and Charles McNary of Oregon. Must I now reject their teachings because Communists ostensibly favor public power?

Senator Mundt's advice could be particularly hard on some mighty fine folks I know. These are the members of the rural electric co-ops in Oregon. Naturally, they favor public power because juice from Bonneville Dam illuminates their farmhouses. But evidently they're going to have to turn off the lights and go back to the days of utility company darkness, because the Communists endorse public power.

I always had thought that final decision over various policies in the United States rested under our own Capitol dome, and I would hate to move it to the Kremlin. Yet could that not be the result of my colleague's proposal?

Can't one imagine Bulganin and his confederates solemnly decreeing that all drinking water should be filtered and purified, in the realization that every water works in America would have to stop cleansing its aqueducts and reservoirs at once? And what if the masters of the Kremlin announced themselves in favor of vaccination against smallpox? Would all doctors in the United States have to throw away their needles and syringes, on the ground that "if they [the Communists] take a unanimous stand for anything, it would be a pretty good rule to be against it"?

My colleague's suggestions might bring about the eventual abandonment of Congress, and this would be a crying shame, especially just after the new pay raise.

But why have Congress when we only need learn what the Kremlin thinks and then go counterwise? If the Kremlin is for peace, we must be for war. If the Kremlin is for free trade, we shall have to raise the tariff. If the Kremlin calls for disarmament, we must build battleships and bombing planes.

As a free American, I am reluctant to give to Communists a veto over what I shall say and think. In Oregon my wife and I participated for a decade in an effort to wipe out bigotry and racial bias. These efforts finally were climaxed by passage through the State Legislature of bills for Fair Employment Practices and civil rights. But we would have stopped far short of victory had we heeded the advice to be against whatever Communists were for. Early in the campaign, Oregon's handful of Communists endorsed both bills. Did this mean we had to abandon the cause of tolerance—nay, even to oppose it —merely because Communists had given it lip-service?

My colleague has suggested that we must show our patriotism by being against what Communism is for, and *vice versa*. Yet the Communists were unanimously against the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance and so were some extremely conservative Republican Senators. Are these men, *ipso facto*, security risks? And if political figures who unwittingly associated with Communists were suspected of Communism, what of political figures who associated with liars?

I WAS among the comparatively few members on the floor of the Senate February 22 when Senator Bush of Connecticut movingly read George Washington's Farewell Address. I rejoiced to myself that guilt by association had not prevailed during colonial times, for I would not have wanted Washington to go down in history smeared with treason because he mistakenly gave his friendship and confidence to the arch-traitor of our country's annals. Happily, this iniquitous doctrine was unknown in 1789, and so George Washington remains "first in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen. . . ."

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"As I Was Saying . . ."

The New Peress Promotion Probe as Seen by Walter Goodman

ON MARCH 15 the Senate Permanent Investigating Subcommittee held its first open hearing of the current investigative season in Room 357 of the Senate Office Building. The big Senate Caucus Room, scene of so many memorable dramatic triumphs, had been temporarily usurped by the Stock Market probers, and only two dozen enthusiasts could find seats for the McClellan (neé McCarthy) Committee's opening performance. Through the Committee room's shut windows came the unrelenting thumps of a pile driver across First Street N.E. It was a wet and warm Tuesday in Washington, but the windows remained shut in deference to the pile driver.

Chairman John L. McClellan (D, Ark.) rapped his gavel twice and proceeded to intone his prepared statement. "The purpose of these hearings is to inquire into all the actions and circumstances attending the Department of the Army's handling of the induction, change in orders, promotion and the honorable discharge of Doctor Irving Peress."

The Chairman chastized the Army for withholding an Inspector General's report on Peress from the Subcommittee. The Army, it developed, had permitted the investigators to study the I.G. report for an hour and a half before snatching it back on Constitutional grounds. Hardly had Chairman McClellan finished charging the Generals with being "unwilling to disclose all the facts" in the case than Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy (R, Wis.) interjected with his first urgent request of the morning. Hunched forward, his thick shoulders seeming to grow from his large head without the graceful intervention of a neck, he made known his compelling desire to see before him in the witness chair UN Representative Henry Cabot Lodge, Assistant to the President Sherman Adams, Attorney General Herbert Brownell, Army Counsel John Adams and the other high Administration officials who "successfully conspired to call off the Peress hearings" and start "an investigation of McCarthy."

There was much that was familiar about the proceedings. Between McCarthy and McClellan Sen. Karl Mundt (R, S.D.) reclined, sucking away first at his pipe, later at his cigar. There was handsome young Henry M. Jackson (D, Wash.) and granite-jawed, steel-haired Stuart Symington (D, Mo.). Hovering behind the Republican Senators was veteran staff member James Juliana, now placing a hand on Joe's shoulder, now bending a well-greased head to Joe's head. Bunched together in one corner of the room were a half-dozen clean-cut majors and lieutenant colonels, complete with combat ribbons and briefcases. Around the witness table sat an impressive legal detachment representing the Army.

Slumped damply in his chair, Sen. George A. Bender (R, O.), new to the proceedings, entered an early plea for a change of venue on the grounds that the pile driver was preventing him from concentrating.

Some prominent members of the old cast were missing. Gone was the curled lip of Roy Cohn, the belligerent chin of Ray Jenkins. Handsome young Committee Counsel Robert Kennedy rose, like a tousle-headed schoolboy facing a blackboard exercise, before two large and immensely forbidding charts. One was entitled "Course of Army Action on Peress Appointment to Major"; the other, "Course of Army Security Action on Irving Peress." Squares collided with rectangles; circles floated mischievously in space; arrows shot off at diagonals, made startling sweeps around obstructive boxes and doubled-back treacherously on themselves. Counsel Kennedy pointed here and there with great earnestness and less effect. As he was getting ready to explain the difference between the solid lines and the broken, McCarthy interrupted to demand of Defense Counsel Wilbur Brucker why the Inspector General's report was not available to the Committee. The tone was aggressive, but the inimitable verve was lacking. It was as though someone had told Joe that the next morning's *New York Times* would carry the story on page 17.

AT LENGTH the first witness was sworn in—Maj. Floyd E. Van Sickle Jr., an open-faced, bespectacled officer flown to Washington from his station in Munich especially for this appearance. Counsel Kennedy was undeviatingly polite; he was even friendly; he actually seemed interested in drawing a coherent chronological story from the major. Where Cohn would have jabbed and Jenkins would have pounded, Kennedy coaxed.

It had just been established that in 1952 Major Van Sickle was stationed on Governor's Island, where he was in charge of handling the papers of officers entering the Army under the doctor-dentist draft act, when Senator McCarthy was once again impelled to speak. He had to know if there was any threat of the "curtain being lowered half-way through this hearing." He reminded Mr. Brucker that during the Committee's spring engagement, the President had forbidden officers to testify about their private conversations. "Have you received some clearance from the President?" he asked Brucker, his voice oozing sarcasm.

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"There is no curtain lowered," replied the Army counsel, "and the information that you have on that subject, I know not the source of, that is, except to say to you . . . " McCarthy saved Brucker from the claws of his own syntax: "The President is the source." "Except to say to you, sir, that the President's letter of May 17 is still in full force and effect and will be respected." The Senator was not comforted. "Have you gotten clearance from the President or are you just violating his order?" he drilled at the weak spot. Brucker assured him that the officers called would testify frankly and freely.

But the Senator's mind was still not eased; his voice rose: "As far as you know, if we call Mr. Rogers and Mr. Lodge and the others who discussed the present case, they should be in the same position as the officers." Brucker hedged: "I will pass upon that when the time comes. . . . " "The time has come!" announced the Senator. "The time has come, and I want to know whether or not . . . Mr. Lodge and Mr. Adams and the others who conspired to call off the Peress hearing, will have their lips unsealed. . . ."

COUNSEL Kennedy now began to draw from the major a classic account of an Army foul-up. While G-2 was investigating Peress, the First Army was promoting him. So far as Major Van Sickle was aware in 1952 and 1953 the Army had no policy with regard to commissioning, promoting or discharging officers who had claimed the Fifth Amendment privilege on their loyalty forms.

"Am I to understand . . . that you were not interested in the Fifth Amendment Communists and that you had no concern about them?" An incredulous McCarthy burst in. Counsel Kennedy interceded for the witness and tried to pacify the Senator, but the McCarthy indignation had been aroused. "Did you have any concern about the Fifth Amendment Communist cases which had been coming through your office?" he demanded. The major denied ever having seen one. "Would it be possible to have the air conditioning turned on in here?" asked Sen. Bender plaintively. "The chair is not the janitor," responded Senator McClellan. Sen. Herman Welker (R, Idaho), who had been moving restively in his seat for the past half hour, fought his way past a teetering chart to jiggle the thermostat a few times, and sat down again. The temperature did not drop.

At 10:45 Senator McCarthy left the hearing room, and the Kennedy examination went along smoothly for 30 minutes. It developed that when he passed Captain Peress' name through channels for an automatic promotion in September, 1953, Major Van Sickle had forgotten that a full field security investigation had been undertaken on the dentist the preceding February.

The Major stretched and rebent a paper clip as he explained that there had been no indication on the Peress status card that reached him in September that the dentist was a security risk. Kennedy pointed out to him a penciled notation marked "Conf. File" on the card. The major said this hadn't been enough to attract his attention when the card passed over his desk.

Senator McCarthy returned in time to catch this exchange and pounced at once. "In one breath you say there is nothing on the card to show he was a security case and in the next breath, after he questioned you, you said 'There was; it was marked Confidential'." He grinned the grin of a professional duellist who has just delivered the *coup de coeur* to an obvious amateur. Then he twisted the blade a little for fun. "Why didn't you go to the confidential file when that was on there? Weren't you curious before approving a promotion to check the confidential file?" Thump. Thump. Thump. Major Van Sickle mangled his paper clip and replied that he'd simply overlooked the "Conf. File" notation in the press of work; his office was processing 2,000 applications a month during this period. McCarthy asked his questions again and again—angry, astounded, outraged all at once. Major Van Sickle's confession sounded weaker and weaker. "I missed it," he said in a voice that verged on collapse. "I missed the entry."

"You think he missed it?" the reporter speculated.

"Why not?" his friend shrugged. "A major once missed a little notation on my status card and I got shipped to Newfoundland after six months of training for desert warfare."

The Chairman himself took on the burden of the questioning for the remaining 10 minutes of the session. He was particularly interested in how it was that five other officers who had taken the Fifth Amendment privilege on their application form after being commissioned were immediately discharged, while Peress slipped through, lasted for a year and was promoted to boot. Major Van Sickle could offer no satisfactory explanation. It was as though he had always accepted the fact that in the Army such snafus *will* happen but that he didn't have the words to explain this to the Senators.

IT WAS noon now, and the Chairman recessed the hearings. But Senator McCarthy begged leave to ask one last pressing question. He wanted Mr. Brucker to tell him whether his promise that Army officers would testify freely applied to John Adams. "Will Adams be allowed to testify as to any conversations about the Peress case, specifically at the meeting of January 21?"

The session ended. Everyone rose, stretched and agreed that the press tables would not be so crowded the following day.

"Well, who promoted Peress?" the reporter asked his friend as they went down to lunch.

The friend stroked his cheek, musing: "Of course, we've still got 25 witnesses to go. . . . "

"But . . . ?"

"But it looks to me like it's that same fellow who gave China away to the Reds."

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"By next year the campaigns for the Presidential nominations of the major political parties will be in full flight. Once again complaints will be heard that the party conventions do not accurately express the popular will and that they are in fact largely controlled by a relatively small group of insiders. Proposals will be made for increasing the popular control over the nominating process by means of the Presidential primary. But it will then be too late. Only a few state legislatures will be in session in 1956 and the selection of delegates will be virtually completed before the public can awaken and make its will felt.

"If reforms are to be introduced into our process of nominating Presidents, they must therefore in the main be effected prior to Presidential years. For then there is time to act. This is a most appropriate year since virtually all of the state legislatures will be in session and the Presidential election is sufficiently near for public interest to be easily awakened.

"We should therefore take stock of the nominating process by which we select our candidates for the Presidency, of the way in which the delegates to the national conventions are selected, how the conventions operate, and who controls them. We should also consider the comparative advantages and disadvantages of a more direct choice of the candidates by the voters through some form of the direct primary."

Conventions and the Popular Will

by Senator Paul H. Douglas

When Andrew Jackson convened the first National Party Convention in 1832, it was a big step forward. Prior to that time, the Senators and Representatives of the Federalist and of the Republican-Democrat parties met in Washington during the legislative session and in caucus selected their candidates. As the Federalist Party began to disappear, control of the dominant Republican-Democrats by the so-called "Virginia dynasty" tightened. Thus Madison succeeded Jefferson and Monroe in turn followed Madison.

The advent of Jackson in 1828, however, brought fresh life into the political processes. Jacksonian democracy expressed the turbulent and equalitarian life of the frontier together with the desires of the lower-income groups of the Eastern seaboard. It was a popular movement aiming to make ours a government not only of and for the people but also by them. As an inevitable part of this program, Jackson and his followers attacked "King Caucus" and the dominance of Congress which they alleged, with good reason, had by the combination between the adherents of Adams, Clay and Crawford flouted the will of the people in choosing John Quincy Adams in 1825 as President instead of "Old Hickory." They called, therefore, for independent national nominating conventions, and in 1832 the revivified Democratic Party renominated Jackson by this process. This had been made possible by the improvements in the means of transportation and communication. With the advent of the railways, conventions became still more practicable, and under the pressure of public opinion the Whig Party finally followed the example of the Democrats in 1840.

Prior to the Civil War it was through the national conventions that the Democratic city organizations of the Atlantic seaboard made their unfortunate alliance with the Southern slavocracy and nominated the succession of so-called "dough faces," or Northern men with Southern principles, namely Lewis Cass in 1848, Franklin Pierce in 1852 and James Buchanan in 1856. It was by means of the national convention that in 1856 the new Republican Party largely replaced the old Whigs who so recently as 1848 had been able to elect a President. It was in the Democratic National Convention of 1860 that the Union was really dissolved, for it was there that the South refused to go along with Stephen A. Douglas' program that the territories should decide whether or not they wanted slavery and insisted instead that the national government, under the authority of the Dred Scott decision, should foster and protect the extension of slavery into the territories and possibly even into the free states themselves. When the Democratic Party split on this issue at Charleston in 1860 and Douglas and Breckenridge faced each other as rival Democratic candidates, the one remaining cohesive national force had been torn asunder. For with the rise of the Republican Party, most of the Southern Whigs had felt forced to enter the Democratic Party and a monolithic structure had been started in the South.

It was through the medium of the national convention that in 1864 the Republican Party was transformed into the Union Party and back again into its former self in 1868. It was in the National Conventions from 1876 to

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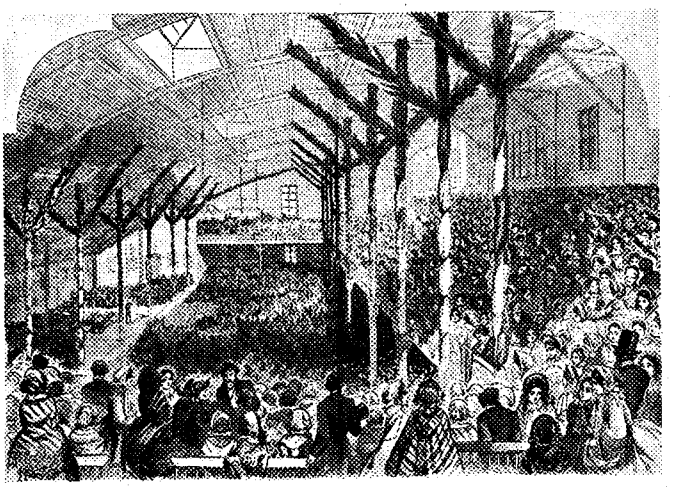
1884 that the groups coalescing around Blaine and Grant respectively waged their bitter personal but non-ideological battles for power. It was in the Democratic National Convention of 1896, that a new popular impulse surged into the Democratic Party which was crystallized in Bryan's amazing "Cross of Gold" speech and which, despite the temporary dominance of the conservative groups in the party in 1904 and 1924, has continued to this day.

It was in the Democratic Convention of 1948 that, swayed by the oratory of Hubert Humphrey, the party ranged itself definitely behind the program of civil rights.

It is therefore seen that national conventions have in the past played an important and at times a highly constructive part in the political decisions of the nation. Underneath the sound and fury and the apparently nonsensical irrelevancies which distract and annoy the thoughtful, there is a far deeper logic which is at work in most conventions and which is imperfectly seen except by active participants. It is the effort of divergent territorial and class interests and ideologies to find a successful unity without too great a sacrifice of principle. There are many features of the nominating process which lend themselves to abuse and which tend to produce government by the few rather than by the people. Gross mistakes are made, as at the Republican convention of 1920 when Warren G. Harding was foisted upon the nation by a coterie of Senatorial bosses. Sometimes inferior candidates are chosen over superior ones. But there is more sanity in the selective process than critics are frequently willing to grant and in making reforms we should take care not to throw the baby out with the bath.

The Rise of Presidential Primaries

Beginning in 1905, under the initiative of Robert LaFollette, progressivism in Wisconsin and the companion movement in Oregon, direct Presidential primaries were instituted in a number of states. Here the voters expressed their preference directly for Presidential candidates and bound delegates from their Congressional districts and states to vote for them initially in the national convention. It was these popularly elected delegates who in 1912 furnished the nucleus of the political support for Theodore Roosevelt in the Republican and for Woodrow Wilson in the Democratic Convention.



The Republicans in nominating convention in their wigwam at Chicago, May, 1860

This innovation was naturally opposed by the professional politicians who preferred the hierarchy of local caucuses, and county, district and state conventions whereby delegates were named to the national conventions. For in this way, the party leaders believed with good reason, that they could better control the final choice. The party leaders, therefore, in the main fought a delaying action against the introduction of Presidential primaries. At times this attitude was one of outright opposition to any direct choice of delegates or candidates while at other times they made the primary vote purely advisory with no binding effect upon the delegates. In still other cases they permitted a popular choice of the delegates but either allowed no designation or an incomplete designation as to whom the delegates were pledged or favored.

As the progressive impulse in American politics weakened during the 1920s, some states gave up the direct primary, while in others the binding quality of the choices was weakened. But the direct primary states still furnished politicians with straws to show which way the winds were blowing and helped them to make up their minds. There is little doubt that the good showing made by Wilson in 1912 and by Franklin Roosevelt in the 1932 primaries helped to swing the conventions their way and that the same was true in the case of Dewey in 1944 and 1948. Similarly the primaries of 1952 confirmed the leaders of the crucial Pennsylvania and Michigan delegations in the belief that Eisenhower would be a stronger candidate than Taft and hence tipped the scales of the convention in his favor.

The fear that the 1952 conventions would not result in the choice of popularly approved candidates but would instead be dominated by the national, state and city organizations led to a marked revival of interest in some form of the Presidential primary. Various proposals were advanced in Congress which will be described later, and New Jersey passed a direct primary law.

Had less popular candidates than Eisenhower and Stevenson been nominated in 1952, there would undoubtedly have been a tremendous upsurge of sentiment for the Presidential primary. Even so, there was enough dissatisfaction with the nominating process and the conduct of the conventions to cause Montana, Nevada and Indiana in 1953 to provide direct primaries for voting on Presidential candidates and for the pledging of delegates to those candidates who received the popular preference. It is interesting to note that the Montana law was submitted to the voters by referendum in November,

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1954, and was approved by a vote of more than two to one. The new Indiana law also pledges delegates to vote on the first ballot for those who win in the primaries.

In all there are now about 525 delegates to the national conventions who are nominally selected in primaries. However, of that number about 225 come from the states of New York, Pennsylvania and Illinois, where the party voters do not really have an opportunity to ascertain the delegates' preferences as between prospective Presidential candidates and these are hence not true Presidential primaries. The remaining 300 delegates, or not far from one-fourth of the total number in each party convention, are therefore the only ones who come to the convention with a clear mandate from the voters of their states as to the candidates they should support.

The twelve states which do have direct primaries of this type are New Hampshire, New Jersey, Ohio, Indiana, Minnesota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Maryland and California. Nearly sixty percent of the delegates to the national conventions are, however, not elected by public primaries at all, but are instead selected by state and district conventions composed of delegates from lower political subdivisions.

Who Controls the Conventions?

In the main, therefore, it is the party leaders and not the people as such who still control the conventions and select the candidates. This process is far more democratic than the rather tightly controlled methods by which the political parties in Great Britain and the Dominions select their leaders, but it is still primarily based upon the assumption that the selection of Presidential candidates is party business rather than public business.

Fifty years ago this used to be the practice as regards virtually all public offices of a state and federal character. The direct primary and the direct election of United States Senators have enormously increased the popular power in these other fields but no such comparable development has taken place in the nomination of our Presidents. The people play only an indirect part in selecting the candidates for what is above all others the one office in which the people are interested.

The insiders who control the machinery of a national convention can within limits significantly control its results. By the chairman granting or refusing recognition for motions, by the switching on and off of the loudspeakers, by control over the music and by the planting of claques in the galleries and on the floor, the stage can be largely rigged for or against a candidate. Many of those who watched the conventions of 1952 on television became aware of this perhaps for the first time. It follows that a President who controls the party machinery can with that instrument and with the federal patronage largely dominate the convention of his party and hence either force his own renomination or that of his successor. The renomination of Taft by the Republican Convention in 1912 was thus undoubtedly contrary to the wishes of rank-and-file Republicans.

The 1920 Democratic Convention at San Francisco

Similarly, the party leaders from New York, Pennsylvania and Illinois can exert great influence in the final choice. This was formerly evidenced by the great power wielded by Charlie Murphy, Tom Taggert and Roger Sullivan, the city "bosses" from those states who, with the aid of the conservative leaders of the Southern Democracy, nominated Alton B. Parker in 1904 and, had it not been for the shift by Sullivan at Baltimore in 1912, would have defeated Woodrow Wilson for the nomination. They also exercised a great influence in the 1920 convention. Behind these political leaders in turn were the traction and gas combines operating through such financiers as Thomas Fortune Ryan and August Belmont. Similar groups have been influential, although to a much lesser degree, in recent Democratic Conventions.

On the Republican side there is little doubt that the big financial interests of the East were largely instrumental in swaying the conventions' choice in 1940, 1944, 1948, and 1952, and that they are now in a powerful position both in the organization of the National party and in those of a very large number of the states.

The Direct Presidential Primary Versus the Convention

The proposal for a national Presidential primary was first seriously advanced by Woodrow Wilson and George W. Norris and is now before the Congress in the form of proposed Constitution amendments sponsored by Senators Langer (N.D.) and Smathers (Fla.) The Langer Amendment calls, among other things, for the holding throughout the nation of a Presidential primary upon a given day under which the candidate who received the largest popular vote in the given party primary would be the nominee. Under this plan the federal aspects of the electoral process would completely disappear, and a vote in New York or Pennsylvania would count as much as one in Nevada or Delaware. The smaller states which would lose much influence under this method naturally

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oppose it, with the result that it would be virtually impossible for it to be ratified by the states even if Congress were to approve it.

To meet this difficulty, Senator Smathers of Florida has proposed a variant of the Norris-Langer method. His amendment also calls for a national primary upon a given day, but he retains the Electoral College principle upon which representation in the national conventions is fundamentally based. The votes in each state would have the same influence upon the Presidential nominations that they now have on the final elections. The small states would therefore be given the advantage they now enjoy through their equality of representation in the Senate.

Turning now to a comparison of these two alternatives, it is obvious that a national primary under the Smathers method would reflect the popular will far more adequately than does the present convention system. But it also would contain grave weaknesses in comparison with the convention system, which need to be considered.

1. The national primary would accentuate conflicts within the parties, whereas the convention system tends to minimize them.

The great merit of the convention system is that in its search for a winning candidate it tends to discard the extremists and bring forward the men around whom not only the party but the nation as well may best rally. Underneath all the noise, turbulence and apparent conflict which characterizes a convention there is, as we have pointed out, a deeper search for unity which will best reconcile the conflicting interests and factions. In the final decisions one can see the working of a kind of political vector analysis in which each set of forces helps to determine the final position.

Were we to substitute a national primary, however, extremists would be encouraged to run for the nomination, and sometimes would win, and the conduct of the primaries would be knock-down and drag-out affairs.

The issues would also tend to be drawn far more sharply and the losers would not be able to exert the tacit influence which they now exercise upon both the choice of the ultimate nominees and the platforms.

Many people would welcome this polarization of politics on the ground that it would lead to a greater stressing of real issues than the present centripetal tendencies of our two party and convention systems. But such a sharper conflict of ideas would only be purchased at the expense of endangering national unity which, in view of the Communist threat to democratic institutions, I do not believe we can afford. Moreover, despite all the somewhat formless nature of our political groupings and the tendency of parties and of the nation to draw together around the center, we have made as much legislative progress during the last half century as any democracy in the world and have at the same time preserved national unity more effectively than in any country outside of the British Commonwealth.

2. It is argued that the party leaders commonly know the hidden strengths and weaknesses of the various candidates far more fully than does the general public. They can, it is said, quietly sidetrack men who have strategic weaknesses which would show up either in the campaign for election or in office. They, however, would either not want to wash this dirty linen during a primary campaign or if they did, passions would be so embittered that united action would later be impossible. There is a strong case for quiet rather than noisy judgments to be rendered on such matters as this in political as in social life. But it is also true that this exercise of judgment can be applied unwisely. Worthy men may be rejected because of their very virtues and unworthy men selected because of their compliance.

3. The national primary would make it impossible to draft reluctant or modest candidates. Men who were not willing to undergo the ordeal of a strenuous primary campaign would be automatically eliminated from consideration. But these are sometimes the very men who once chosen would make the best Presidents. Sometimes as high an office as the Presidency should seek the man.

4. Another objection is that the national primary would impose an added burden of strain and expense to what is already an almost crushing load upon candidates. Not only is the Presidency the most exacting job in the world, but the campaign which is required to attain the office is most exhausting. To superimpose a second nationwide campaign would mean that for almost a full year prior to the election, the candidates would be subjected to intense physical and nervous pressures, and unless they were supermen the winner would come to this most important of all jobs in a condition of almost complete physical exhaustion. A good deal of this is already involved in the pre-convention campaigns, but it would be intensified by the requirement of a second national election. Additional millions of dollars would also be required to finance the primary campaigns, and the advantages which wealth already possesses in this respect would be intensified.

5. It is obvious that conventions would still be needed to adopt party platforms and that these need to be co-ordinated with the desires of the Presidential nominees. Furthermore, a primary is an extremely poor way to select a Vice Presidential nominee since no one ever runs for that office, and it is generally assigned to some one who in the opinion of the Presidential candidate and the party leaders will "balance the ticket" by representing a different geographical section and set of interests.

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A Reconciling Program

The truth seems to be that neither the convention system as it is now operated nor the national direct primary is a satisfactory method of nominating Presidential candidates. The need is, therefore, to reconcile the two alternatives and, while retaining the good features of both, minimize their respective defects.

Representative Charles E. Bennett of Florida and I believe that we have found such a reconciliation. We have introduced such a measure in the last two Congresses and this year have once again submitted it (S. 652) for action. It does not call for a direct national primary but seeks instead to stimulate the states so that they, in increasing measure, will provide for direct primaries as the method of selecting their delegates to the national conventions. Our bill provides that states which agree to operate under the federal Presidential primary law will receive a grant-in-aid of 20 cents for each vote cast in such a primary. The federal government would thus meet the election expenses for the selection of candidates for the most important federal office. The federal government in turn would set up a bipartisan Presidential Primaries Commission of five members who would hold office for staggered terms. A candidate, in order to be certified to run, would have to submit nominating petitions signed by at least 1,000 qualified voters from each of at least three-quarters of the states which had agreed to take part in the program. Candidates so designated would have until March 20th of election years to withdraw, and by March 25th the Commission would certify the names of those still in the race to the participating states.

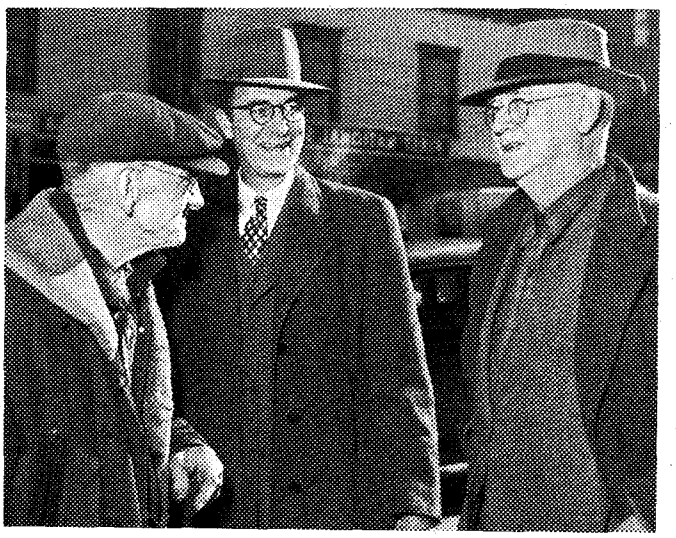
States which had agreed to come under the system would in turn provide for the holding of their Presidential primary between April and August. The states would only include on their ballots the names of those who were nationally certified and would only permit each qualified voter to vote in the political party in which he was registered. Increased party responsibility would therefore be provided. The delegates-at-large from a state would be bound to vote, for a given period of time, for the candidate who had a plurality of the primary votes in the state as a whole. Delegates from the various Congressional districts would be similarly bound for the winners in their districts, who of course might not be the same as for the state as a whole.

There is some question as to how tight the mandate should be upon the delegates. It is, of course, essential that some instructions should be given or otherwise the primary would have no point. Experience has shown that the so-called "advisory primaries" have little meaning or value. But the instructions should not be so ironclad as to prevent the convention from choosing from a number of aspirants, none of whom might have an initial majority.

In its original form, the Bennett-Douglas bill provided that the pledge would be binding on the first ballot and as long as the candidate's vote exceeded 10 percent of the total delegate vote, or until the candidate himself released the delegates. This is substantially the provision which now governs the Oregon and Wisconsin delegations. This created the danger that a convention might be deadlocked between a number of candidates. The control over the votes of the delegates would thereafter largely rest in the candidates rather than in the delegates themselves, and this might result either in hopeless confusion or in a great deal of improper trading. We have removed this defect in our present draft which provides that delegates may also be released if their candidate polls less than 20 percent of the vote on the third ballot and less than 30 percent on the fifth.

In my judgment, this plan combines the advantages of a far greater popular voice in the selection of Presidential candidates while it retains most of the flexibility of the convention system. The primaries would thus be a first sifting of candidates on the basis of their relative popular support. The running of obscure "favorite sons" for the purpose of giving the delegation bargaining power would be discouraged. But the delegates could still exercise their independent judgment when the primaries disclosed no clear popular choice. The conventions would still be able to balance the ticket with appropriate Vice-Presidential nominees and co-ordinate the platform with the candidacies.

No single plan is likely to be ideal in all respects, but we submit that this is probably as good a proposal as can be devised. It has the practical advantage, moreover, of being relatively easy of initial adoption by Congress while it would also permit gradual and voluntary growth within the states. It does not require sweeping and immediate changes. The sponsors of the bill hope that it may receive widespread popular support so that it may be passed this year and hence enable some states to act in time for the 1956 conventions.



Sen. Estes Kefauver (D, Tenn.) campaigning in the 1952 New Hampshire Presidential primary.

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GERALD W. JOHNSON

★

The Superficial Aspect

THE PRESIDENT telegraphed to the chairman of a meeting at which the Vice President was to speak, "I am happy to call Dick Nixon my friend." This certainly warranted assumption by the audience that what Dick Nixon said would be in accord with the President's wishes, since no true friend of a President will make political speeches distasteful to the man in the White House.

What Nixon said was, "The Republican Party is not strong enough today to elect a President. We have to have a man who is strong enough to elect the party."

If this is not Eisenhower's attitude, then Nixon has dropped the watermelon again. If it is his attitude, then what is the meaning of his brusque suppression of any White House correspondent who ventures to mention the Indispensable Man? Over and over, Eisenhower has insisted that there is no Indispensable Man; now Dick, whom he is happy to call his friend, flatly contradicts him and says not only that there is an Indispensable Man, but that Eisenhower is it.

As far as factual accuracy is concerned, a superficial observer is bound to line up with Nixon. In 1952, the voters enthusiastically accepted the candidate, but almost rejected the party; in 1954 they did reject it and turned Congress over to the Democrats. The inescapable inference is that Eisenhower is all the Republicans have, and if he should be lost or damaged they would be sunk.

The interesting thing, though, is not the accuracy of the Vice President's estimate, but the circumstances under which it was promulgated. They can be interpreted in either of two ways. They may indicate that Eisenhower has learned no politics at all in the past two years; or they may indicate that he has learned very rapidly indeed.

If he has learned nothing, he may still believe that he can go on calling people his very dear friends without being saddled with any responsibility for what those people say. If he has learned a great deal, he may have mastered the technique of hypocrisy which dictates that the candidate should shrink in maidenly modesty while his dear friends wallop the gong.

The question is, will either explanation sustain the personal prestige through which he was swept into the Presidency of a country that definitely did not want his party? It is doubtful, to put it mildly. The voters of 1952, knowing that Ike was no professional politician, yet hoped that his mind was supple and realistic enough to learn how to cope with the professionals; but if he has learned nothing, that hope is disappointed.

On the other hand, if he has learned enough to insist coyly on his expendability in public while privately encouraging his friends to shell the woods for delegates, then he has become a politician and is no longer the Eisenhower of 1952. The shoddy tricks of the ordinary vote-grabber do not sit well on the image of Eisenhower in the people's mind. If he is in fact adopting them, that would be a greater disappointment.

Nixon's suggestion that Ike should be the Trojan horse through whose instrumentality a party that the people do not want may be introduced into the citadel is highly practical politics, but it is also monumental trickery; and for Eisenhower to lend himself to trickery on that scale would be a repudiation of his whole character as the public has envisaged it.

The hopeful, accordingly, will prefer the other theory—that the fabulously clumsy Nixon once again has contrived to present the President in a completely false light, by attributing to him a deviousness foreign to his make-up. But how long can that sort of thing continue without disaster, certainly to Eisenhower and perhaps to the country?

A SHOGUNATE is not a practicable form of government for this country at this time. Japan had to abandon it as long ago as 1868 and make the titular head of the state the actual ruler. This country cannot revive the system of keeping the emperor shut off by the Palace Guard from all contact with political reality while persons to whom the nation owes no loyalty conduct public affairs in his name.

So the theory of naïveté is really no more reassuring than the theory of cynical sophistication. Either entails trouble in a big way. Perhaps by exposing the facts nakedly and glaringly Mr. Nixon's ineptitude may for once have served the country well; for the country cannot safely continue to vote for an image that does not correspond to the man.

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BOOKS & COMMENT

Walt Whitman:

"Garrulous to the Very Last"

by Irving Howe

WHITMAN has not been very fortunate in his critics—and, one sometimes feels like blurting out, it serves him right! Seldom has a great poet engaged in such adolescent mystifications with regard to himself and his work, seldom has a poet so blatantly promoted a cult of worship in which he served as both prophet and martyr—

The Solitary Singer, by Gay Wilson Allen (Macmillan; $8). *Leaves of Grass, One Hundred Years After*, Edited by Milton Hindus (Stanford; $5).

though toward the end of his life even Whitman, in whom the promoter and the mystagogue are closely allied, grew tired of his disciples and began to mock them in a way beyond their capacity to notice. As a result of his need to think of himself in a variety of prophetic roles, Whitman became a victim of his own legend rather than a subject of critical appreciation. People with notions about cosmic consciousness, transubstantiation, indeterminate sexuality and, somewhat later, anti-Fascist unity, soon attached themselves to the roomy dogmas near his book. Academicians wrote studies trying to persuade one another that they really cared whether Whitman was a neoplatonist or a pantheist or a believer in metempsychosis. And many poets and critics of the past few decades, because they didn't write like Whitman but did, all too often, write like T. S. Eliot, felt they had to keep sticking pins into his reputation until, by the sheer accumulation of thrusts, it would collapse.

All this has made it extremely difficult to get at Whitman the poet and almost impossible to get at him directly: too many traps and barriers of our culture stand in the way. We have no choice but to begin with his critics, about whom Whitman once said—and here he was truly a prophet—"I will certainly elude you."

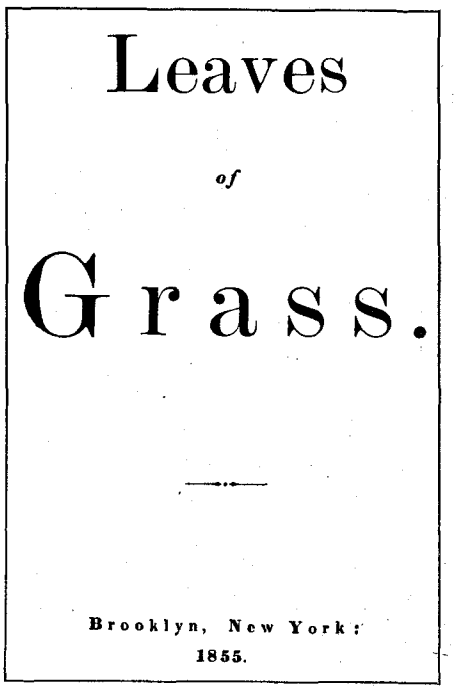
One main line of criticism has stressed Whitman as public spokesman, thereby accepting his claim to embody the collective spirit of American democracy in his rather eccentric individuality. Thereby too it has been forced into the position of placing the greatest valuation upon his more grandiose programmatic poems, a procedure that invites the embarrassment of having to take his formal ideas seriously. A second major line of criticism has exalted Whitman as a sexual champion or liberator, a sort of linsey-woolsey Lawrence—a Lawrence, that is, without the bother of Frieda.

OF inducements and provocations for seeing Whitman in these vatic postures his work offers no lack, but such critical approaches, I am convinced, obscure what is best in the poems themselves and create public images of the poet that, for good or bad, can only estrange him from the audience he deserves. That these approaches to Whitman also happen to be in violent conflict with each other makes for a fine bit of cultural comedy: the nationalist Whitmanites sniff the other way when they get to the sex poems, while the sexualist Whitmanites write as if their hero had never lived in a country.

As a national prophet Whitman now seems inadequate because he so cheerfully lacks, perhaps even refuses, a full sense of social complexity: the Jacksonian mind, admirable as it was and much as one wants to preserve something of its original vigor and bias, seems light-years away from us, almost "pastoral" in its innocence and assurance. For all that Whitman's poems often speak about city life they do not really capture its terrible *newness*, nor do they register that anticipatory awareness of the problems raised by industrialism and the mass society which helps keep the work of other nineteenth century writers fresh and relevant. To be sure, the fact that Whitman's was a pre-industrial mind would not matter at all (it certainly doesn't matter for innumerable poets before him)—were it not that in his later poems one finds frequent signs of incoherence due to his bewilderment before the kind of America coming into existence after the Civil War.

As a sexual prophet, however, Whitman suffers from an opposite difficulty: he has done his work too well, no one is now likely to be shocked by the "Children of Adam" or "Calamus" poems. Some of them charm us, others are troubling because of the abstractness with which they celebrate the need for concrete experience, and after reading all of them one cannot help wishing that Whitman had indicated some faint awareness that the sexual liberation he proclaimed might bring new troubles of its own.

To say, however, that the dominant modes of Whitman criticism are not presently very helpful is not to slight a number of fine studies. An early conservative book like Bliss Perry's has the merit of being among the first to assess, without hysteria or too great hostility, what Whitman actually wrote. Van Wyck Brooks' chapter in *America's Coming of Age*, while presenting Whit-


Leaves

of

Grass.

Brooklyn, New York:
1855.

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man as the American Bard, is a powerful cultural statement. Basil de Selincourt's book, for all that it succumbs to the English fondness for seeing Whitman as the Great American Naïf, contains many acute remarks on his poetic technique. D. H. Lawrence in his *Studies in Classic American Literature,* despite mixed feelings toward a writer close to him in expression but alien in temperament, finally comes through by hailing Whitman as one of the great pioneers in transcending the body-mind dualism.

Yet none of these books will quite do for us now, since none of them succeeds in getting past Whitman's *persona* and into his poetry. This task is surely the most challenging that faces American criticism, but it remains neglected because most American literary people are either indifferent to Whitman or think of him as a mere loud-mouth. The extreme version of this latter opinion comes, predictably, from the powerful critic Yvor Winters who writes that Whitman "a second-rate poet . . . had no capacity for any feeling save of the cloudiest and most general kind." As against such admirably direct wrong-headedness, there are a few signs that Whitman is again being considered by serious critics, notably a brilliant, wide-eyed essay by Randall Jarrell which simply points to Whitman's achievements in language, as if to say: *For God's sake, forget the prophecy, forget the philosophy, just look at these lines, they're good enough to read, they're poetry!*

MEANWHILE, amidst the pomp and tedium of the Centenary, a new outpouring of Whitman books has begun. The first, by Gay Wilson Allen, is one of those over-stuffed biographies that have recently become fashionable. The book, it can be said without hesitation, is dull enough to qualify as a definitive work. Mr. Allen manages to avoid a point of view on almost every controversial aspect of Whitman's life or writings, and this of course helps contribute to the tone of definitiveness. After having spent a lifetime studying Whitman —the jacket says twenty-five years—he is unable to write a page about the poems that has a touch of critical originality or even eccentricity. His credentials as a critic may be tested by his opinion that Whitman's verse lacks irony, a deficiency which turns out, however, to be a virtue since, he tells us, "irony results from self-pity or loss of faith." About Whitman's private life Mr. Allen writes, "he had not made up his mind or did not know whether sex meant primarily an instinctive hunger or responsible paternity"—which indicates that Mr. Allen may have a thoroughly wholesome mind but that a thoroughly wholesome mind is not the ideal qualification for a biographer of Walt Whitman. Well, the book will have to be read by graduate students in American Literature.

Whitman in 1855

Mr. Hindus' collection of essays is another matter: it presents, whether by intention or not, a vivid picture of the schisms, disagreements and cross-currents in recent Whitman criticism. William Carlos Williams, in a characteristic prose rant, writes as if free verse were one of the inalienable rights for which the American Revolution was fought; Middleton Murry invokes the religious sense behind Whitman's democracy, but in terms so vague and grand that it might as well be his own religious sense that is being honored; Kenneth Burke buries himself beneath the grassy debris of free associations on the word "leaves"; Mr. Hindus plumps for Whitman the nationalist or perhaps supernationalist, a Whitman whom he calls "Pan-American" and compares with Dostoevsky the pan-Slavic and Wagner the pan-German. (Mr. Hindus fails to consider how unjust this comparison is, if only because Dostoevsky's pan-Slavism was streaked with rather unattractive elements of anti-Semitism.)

There are, however, two first-rate essays in the book, one by Leslie Fiedler in which he offers a sharp and witty history of Whitman's reputation, ending with a rejection of the vatic Whitman and an acceptance of the Whitman who writes of private experience, and the other by Richard Chase in which he presents the best portrait of Whitman that has yet been composed.

Fiedler's essay points the direction for a revival of serious interest in Whitman, though I think he sometimes runs wild in imposing his favorite critical tags on a writer already stuccoed with everyone else's (*e.g.*, "Whitman's America was made in France, the Romantic notion out of Rousseau and Chateaubriand of an absolute anti-Europe, an utter anticulture made flesh, the Noble Savage as a Continent"—which is bright but hardly verifiable by Whitman's verse).

The Chase essay presents Whitman as a "divided, multiple personality, a shifting amalgam of sycophancy and sloth, of mimetic brilliance and Dionysian inspiration, of calculating common sense and philosophical insight. . . ." His Whitman is neurotic, violently energetic and profoundly indolent by turns, whimsical and witty, given to sharp transitions from manic self-assertion to painful self-doubt. As far as Whitman's sexuality goes, Chase rejects the claim that he was actively and persistently heterosexual, homosexual or both, but sees him instead as a man in whom the sexual impulse did not come to sharp expression but remained latent, diffuse and unfocused. One is reminded somewhat of Turgenev, in whom a large masculine frame was also combined with a maternal fleshiness. And like Turgenev, Whitman is a writer endowed with a curiously impersonal tenderness, a kind of pansexual empathy that is available to all objects, whether sentient or not, in the external world. There is of course no way of "proving" that this is an entirely accurate description of Whitman, and Mr. Chase is wise enough not to try; but his portrait has the positive merit of corresponding rather closely to the sense of Whitman one gains from the poetry, as well as the negative merit of not forcing us to violate or stretch the scant evidence we have from Whitman's life.

II.

It is a priceless historical joke that the one poet we accept as the National

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Bard should lack all the accredited national virtues. Whitman himself knew this, and to recognize how aware he was of the ambiguity of his role is to gain much in reading the poetry, for then it is easier to grasp its half-hidden irony and humor—Whitman staring in amusement at the sheer oddity of his being Walt a *kosmos*, or Whitman announcing that "Having pried through the strata, analyz'd to a hair, counsel'd with doctors and calculated close,/ I find no sweeter fat than sticks to my own bones." In his old age he once declared himself to be essentially *furtive*, a description some biographers take, perhaps rightly, to refer to his sexual history; but I think it must be applied to his life and work as a whole, to those strategies and strategems by which he sends his assumed and hypothetical selves out into the world to discover their possibilities. Almost all American writers tend to be furtive—they have to in this country; but Whitman assumes the role with a greater consciousness of its necessity, its strangeness and its price.

WHITMAN speaks for the national ethos, the divine average, the *En Masse,* but he is actually a solitary, a secretive watcher. Whitman calls himself "one of the toughs," but the greatest esthetic pleasure of this lonely Bohemian is the opera every American knows to be boring and effete, and his taste in general runs toward the delicate and the rococo. Whitman puffs out his chest with the rhetoric of democracy, but his vision of the democratic life—because it involves a sexual fraternity which can only arouse the fiercest anxieties among Americans, who see in it a threat to their protective code of manliness—must be thoroughly unacceptable to the nation that fancies him its poetic spokesman. It is all a comedy of errors, and if one sometimes feels that Whitman's critics serve him right, one may also indulge the feeling that Whitman serves America right.

I have said that Whitman was a Bohemian, but not with the intention of calling to mind those desperate estrangements and eccentricities the term is likely to suggest when used with regard to writers of our own time. American society in the nineteenth century was sufficiently loose and self-confident not merely to give most people a sense of social possibility but also to allow a margin for the survival and even the health of those who did not accept its dominant values. It was easier to be a Bohemian then, as it was easier to be a political or intellectual dissident, and by that token being a Bohemian in the 1850's did not mean a life as alienated and self-afflicting as it must often mean today. The idea of society had not yet become so overwhelming as it is for us; for long stretches of *Leaves of Grass* it seems a secondary actor, only occasionally providing that resistance to human desire which we have learned to expect from it. The writer who aspired to fulfill Emerson's prescription for the American poet—and who almost succeeded, but for the fact that he became something better—found that between America and himself there were large spaces, perhaps even wastes, and that it was this very spaciousness which allowed him to take chances in his poetry, allowed him to become a furtive experimenter and to test out variant possibilities of the self without having to worry about the pressures of society nearly as much as European writers had to worry.

This freedom, to be sure, also brought unhappy results: it made Whitman much too cavalier toward the past of both Europe and European poetry, it tempted him into discarding literary conventions he had barely tested, let alone understood. And it made him into the first of the many American writers who would try, in the earnestness of their isolation and with the seductive beat of the national music in their ears, to force themselves into the role of folk or tribal poet. In the career of Whitman, as in the careers of Hart Crane and Sherwood Anderson and many others, this effort could lead only to a wearying oscillation between a willed populism and a precious artiness. The price our writers have paid for trying, so to speak, to swallow the idea of America whole has almost always been a series of relapses into the shallowest kinds of estheticism. Scratch an American primitive and you often find an American decadent.

YET, in the main, Whitman had no choice. Given the disintegrative pressures of his family background; the nature of American life and culture at the time he began to write; a scrappy education, as wide and wooly as the educations of most of our literary autodidacts—given all this, Whitman *had* to try to move back and forth between national and private themes, and the miracle is that all the while he managed to write so much good and even a sizable amount of great poetry.

The most fruitful of his *persona*, the one that corresponds most to the reality of his personal and literary needs, has been described, though not of course with Whitman in mind, by the German sociologist Georg Simmel in an essay called *The Stranger*. "If wandering," writes Simmel

> . . . is the liberation from every given point in space, and thus the conceptual opposite to fixation at such a point, the sociological form of the "stranger" presents the unity . . . of these two characteristics . . . The stranger is being discussed here, not in the sense often touched upon in the past, as the wanderer who comes today and goes tomorrow, but rather as the person who comes today and stays tomorrow. He is, so to speak, the *potential* wanderer; although he has not moved on, he has not quite lost the freedom of coming and going. He is fixed within a particular spatial group . . . But his position in this group is determined, essentially, by the fact that he has not belonged to it from the beginning, that he imports qualities into it. . . .

Locating the stranger as "a unity of nearness and remoteness," Simmel limits himself to examples based on a clash of cultural styles and does not consider the still more interesting case where the "strangeness" of the stranger derives not from national differences but from a fundamental divergence of outlook and value that has sprung up within a culture. It is in the poet-prophet such as Whitman that this divergence is most vividly dramatized, the poet-prophet whose role is made possible by his "unity of nearness and remoteness" and is sanctioned by the readiness of his culture to accept, however conditionally, his ambiguous status.

Does not Simmel's description illuminate Whitman the poet? The man who comes today and stays tomorrow, the potential wanderer whose position in the group is fixed but who imports qualities into it—is this not the author of *Song of Myself*, a poet both remarkably close to everything characteristic and indigenous in our culture and extremely alien and remote from it. The self of the poem is necessarily fluid, defined by its unwillingness to rest in definition, committed with a mixture of

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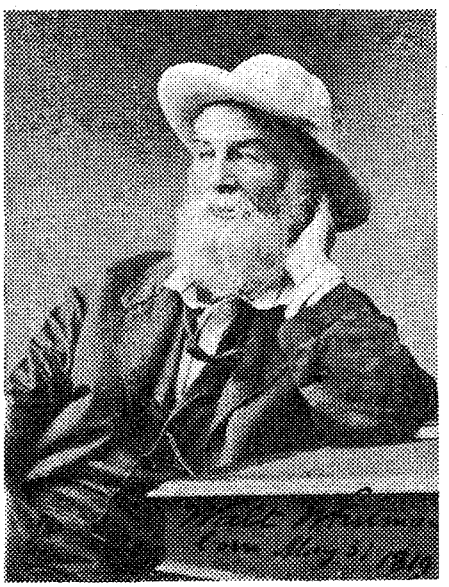
ingenuous faith and comic skepticism to that belief in *possibility* which is possible only to Americans. At times this self expands to the condition of a protean demigod who absorbs all creatures into his creative will yet is saved from solipsism by the grace, rather infrequent among demigods, of having a sense of humor. At times the self of the poem sinks to an almost mineral tranquillity, a torpor approaching non-identity, a quasi-mystical dissolution of individual consciousness. The famous "oceanic" impulse which Whitman shares with other romantic poets, the "merging" impulse which disturbs many readers because it seems to blur all distinctions in quality of being, is here made acceptable and often rendered moving by the clear evidence—Whitman seldom tries to deny or hide it—that the self of the poem also acts from a deep anxiety and loneliness, a fear of annihilation which prompts its urge to cosmic identification. This cosmic straining loses much of its apparent pretentiousness once it becomes clear that it is being presented as an emblem of the poet's fears, the very fears we all know and all share. Reduce it from philosophical grandiosity to a common human tremor, and Whitman's possession of all possible selves, as his corresponding withdrawal from them, becomes close and intimate.

WHAT matters, however, is not the variety of postures the self assumes in the poem but the charm and wit and openness of passion with which they are assumed. To be sure, Whitman occasionally succumbs to rhetorical bluster and a kind of inane benignity—and who is he, one asks with an irritation all too human, to pretend to be so assured and reassuring about *our* destiny? Yet between the extremes of his cosmic megalomania and the disintegration to which the fluid self is sometimes subjected, there is the rich substance of the poem, the elegaic gravity that lends it so exquisitely dignified a tone, the quiet comedy that acts as a counter-principle to the poem's surface expansiveness. "I have no mockings or arguments, I witness and wait." "Not words, not music or rhyme I want, not custom or lecture, not even the best/ Only the lull I like, the hum of your valved voice." "Speech is the twin of my vision, it is unequal to measure itself,/ It provokes me forever, it says sarcastically,/ *Walt you contain enough, why don't you let it out then?*" "Agonies are one of my changes of garments." "I am the man, I suffer'd, I was there."

These lines are spoken by a Stranger in the midst, a Stranger who is integral to that from which he moves apart. The poem is in this sense the most American of poems, entirely committed to the idea of freedom as something unfinished and still to be made. The self is seen as an experiment in potentiality, and Whitman, as the freest and gayest of "pragmatists," tries on new "selves" almost as if they were new clothes—I make the comparison partly to suggest an excessively American nonchalance but I hope that after a moment it will also suggest a certain reticence and even shyness.

Meanwhile, a word must be said to explode the common notion that Whitman's language is vague and inflated and pompous. At his best, and in *Song of Myself* he is frequently at his best, Whitman is a master of phrasing, a master of the precise, delicate and epi-



Whitman in 1872

grammatic statement, a master of the kind of writing which by its combination of unfamiliar elements brings us to the *surprise* of a new insight or observation. I shall not clutter up these pages with examples, but anyone who even glances at *Song of Myself*—anyone who turns to the incredible descriptive power with which Section 5 ends ("And mossy scabs of the worm fence, heap'd stones, elder, mullein and poke-weed") or to the very next section in which the grass is "the flag of my disposition" and then a few lines later "the beautiful uncut hair of graves" or to the final Sections where death ("You bitter hug of mortality") is approached and accepted and yet parried—should see that this is the work of a poet with the greatest gift for language.

One of the main jobs for the Whitman critic who is yet to appear would be to describe, with scrupulous modesty, the variety of modes and tones in which Whitman writes. Here let me simply say a word about one of them. There are passages in his long poems, and whole shorter ones, in which the struggle of the self to locate a principle of movement, or a place of rest, comes to a momentary stop. A quietness begins; the language becomes hushed and completely controlled; the poet, not Walt the *kosmos* but Whitman the solitary, exposes himself in all his vulnerability. It is the moment after the struggle between the self and everything that resists and hurts and destroys the self, the blessed moment when anxiety has not been suppressed or dispelled but brought to its proper subordination. He reaches such moments in occasional passages of *Song of Myself* and for almost the whole of *Crossing Brooklyn Ferry*, which seems to me his single greatest poem. One thinks of them as moments of twilight, somewhat similar to those shadowy intervals between sleeping and waking, when the unconscious is still active and free yet we are not without some capacity to extricate ourselves from it, and when the will is present to our sense of things yet is relaxed and uncensorious. These are moments of rare psychic balance, everyone knows them in one way or another, but few writers have managed to create verbal equivalents as beautiful as those Whitman has.

It is in these moments that he writes most remarkably of death. At his frequent second best and his occasional worst, Whitman writes of death in the terms of late romanticism, as an adored agony he is waiting to immerse himself in. Yet even as we sense that behind his absorption with death there are pockets of the morbid, we feel that in such chants as *Crossing Brooklyn Ferry* the morbid has been, not exorcised, since it continues to have a claim upon us, but resisted, held in control, and thereby made into something other than itself. It is one of the great creative paradoxes that when Whitman here speaks of death he does so with the accent and breath of life; that when he acknowl-

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edges in *Brooklyn Ferry* the certainty of his non-being in the future it is to take on the being of those who like himself will stand and muse upon the continuity and the tragic finality of life; that when he croons his love to death in *Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking* it is with the assurance of gained life.

It has become customary to speak of such writings as a reflection of the religious sense. Theologians without theology try to salvage their faith by focussing upon those emotions of awe before the external world and of gratitude for being present in it for a few moments, which all human beings of minimal sensitiveness have. But to speak of such feelings as uniquely religious is arrogantly to pre-empt what is pervasively human. We are concerned here with the poise toward which we strain, the poise that goes beyond the triviality of "accepting" death but consists of a readiness to find a kind of peace in the determination not to accept.

THE Whitman I have been presenting is an unorthodox one, and surely incomplete. I would claim nothing more for him than that he allows for a usable strategy for getting into the poems. Once that is done, it will no doubt be necessary to return to the other, the public Whitman.

And a final unorthodox note: It is generally said that Whitman declined in poetic power after the Civil War. This is true in a way, the poems of the later years being obviously more fragmentary and short-breathed than those of the earlier ones. But among the later pieces there are some with the most subtle refinement and humor. In his very old age he wrote a twelve-line poem called *After the Supper and Talk* in which he describes his reluctance to leave—we need hardly be told what it is that he must leave:

> Shunning, postponing severance—seeking to ward off the last word, ever so little . . .
> Farewells, messages lessening—dimmer the forthgoer's visage and form,
> Soon to be lost for aye in the darkness —loth, O so loth to depart!
> Garrulous to the very last.

No praise is needed, nor could any be sufficient, for the frank pathos and relaxed gaiety of that final line. This is the way a man, and a poet, should end —garrulous to the very last.

A Truce in Toyland

by Geoffrey Wagner

"THEY never had it so good." Certainly the visitor to the 1955 American Toy Fair just concluded in New York, the largest ever and boosted as the biggest single trade fair in the world, must concede that the recreational activities of moppets under sixteen years of age are being well attended to. In fact the Fair, to which 1,400 exhibitors sent toys and from which at least ten times as many buyers bought, proved a delightfully exhilarating experience for at least one adult. Though personally I would have preferred it if commercials had not been piped at me throughout from a radio on a small boy's bike.

For toyland is assuredly booming and Samuel Gross, President of the Toy Manufacturers of the USA, has predicted a record year—"probably $600 million worth at the manufacturing level." Whether innocently, or owing to recent criticism, the majority of toys displayed were thoroughly wholesome, and many of them were pleasantly spontaneous. "Playthings with a purpose" was the accent and the gimmick toy tended to be soft-pedalled. There appeared to be a maximum of do-it-yourself toys, including a plethora of cooking, sewing, and medical kits for the girls, and construction machinery for the boys; there was a minimum of watch-it toys, such as a pretentious set of parachutists I saw monotonously dropping over enemy terrain. These latter are really no more than spectacular window displays.

As a matter of fact, there seemed to have been less emphasis on recent technological innovations as such in our toy mart than in the Toy Trade Fair which recently closed at Harrogate in England, and where, for instance, a really up-to-date tiny could buy a bucking bronco from whose saddle he was compelled to watch TV. True, we had our flying saucers, two-speed fire chief cars, our rocket ships and radar-scanning devices, but I believe our tone was quieter. I did not personally notice many TV toys. I saw a baby TV camera and I looked in at a TV theatre showing garish color slides, but at this point, I confess, my attention was distracted by the antics of a large woolly dog. This was slowly, from the upright stance, sitting back on its haunches; then, with a solemn *Wuff!*, it leaped several feet into the air, executed a *dégagé* somersault, and landed firmly on its sit-upon. The first time I saw this delightful pup perform I stepped back smartly, thus setting off the Jet-Rail Express, a plastic train which began hurtling round a low table.

THIS, I realized, was the leit-motif of the show—super-realism. The dog I had been watching was really *more* real than most dogs, and the dolls were so lifelike that some of them had sat as models for baby photographers. In the midst of this strenuous microcosm, then, of adult life made miniature, with everything from doll-size electric mixers (which mix) to a model county jail (marked "Sheriff"), there is little place for the morbid melodrama of the comic-book or breakfast-cereal toy. A few disconsolate-looking cap-pistols lay about, but most of the guns I saw were embedded in cowboy sets, and atom bombs, *de rigueur* two years ago I'm told, were definitely out.

What was fascinating in these simulacra, however, was the verisimilitude of the average doll—"Drinks Wets Sleeps Cries Blows Bubbles" as one manufacturer boasted (oh so rightly) of his product. Yet this turned out to be nothing. There are now dolls which eat, excrete, urinate, dribble, burp, dolls with moving lips and eyes, with voices (a battery running a tiny record within), and dolls, sophisticated dolls, with removable toenails for the application of nail polish. Let no one say that Miss America is not being prepared to rear her children! For instance, the Dy-Dee Baby—"The Almost Human Doll"—comes in a box containing, I observed, a bottle, a spoon, pipe for blowing bubbles, bubble soap, ordinary soap, an enema-pear, Kleenex tissues, various "pacifiers," Q-tips for ear cleaning (no ear-wax supplied, however), and an assortment of brand-name cereals. An instructional booklet on diapering accompanied the whole. But so far as I could see the Dy-Dee Baby could not walk, and it certainly, wretched thing, couldn't kneel—unlike Posie, "The Walking Doll of a Hundred Life Like Poses," which can do all this and eat

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and "pee-pee" too. I was curious as to how a doll eats, but, with a proud "dolls do everything now," a representative kindly instructed me. The food is inserted through the lips and it drops, yes, through a hole in the bottom.

It is surely curious, this odd mix-up of the devastatingly frank and the decorously prim. In the average Hollywood movie, Hortense Powdermaker has shown us, biology is taboo. We know now that the word "Ladies" on a door in the movies must be altered to "Powder Room," and that when a boy relieves himself against a wall in *Bicycle Thieves* (a daily sight in my district of New York, may I say) it is grounds for censorship. Whatever the psychological implications may be, however, I personally find it rather revolting to pick up a doll which brags that it can dribble through the nostrils. I was also rather surprised to unzipper the *back* of a rather attractive toy dog in velvet and find five bouncing toy puppies, all in matching velvet, emerging. Incidentally, several colored dolls—such as the winning So-Wee Bottle Baby—were on display. These are all markedly Negro in facial type. I saw no Puerto Rican dolls present.

NATURALLY, being such faithful facsimiles of adult objects, most of these toys ran "plugs" for manufacturers. I saw a girl's vanity set, for example, supplied with Colgate dentifrice, Camay soap, Lustre-creme shampoo, Hazel Bishop nail varnish, and so forth. Even dolls' beds are supplied with conspicuously branded sheets. Boys' tractors, too, will carry trade-names. Usually several manufacturers collaborate in these sets. How good this is must remain open to question. It is certainly an unbalanced emphasis and indeed a European critic has called our new realism in toys "depressingly lifelike," suggesting, among other things, that our emphasis in playthings for girls encourages inequality of the sexes. It is a false argument, I feel sure, for there is a great deal of vigorous inventiveness provoked by some of the fresher "fixit" toys for girls, even when these are solely concerned with cooking or housework. Still, I must admit, that I left certain of the dolls—"So lifelike they're frightening," as my guide happily informed me—with a slight *frisson* of disgust. Just then, however, a rather fatalistic-looking father was testing a backyard roller coaster set, and it seemed advisable to keep clear. He was supposed, according to the book, to "take a graceful dip and swiftly glide to a wavy section and slow down to a final incline." In fact, he careened madly and made a pancake landing beside some Bar B Q camping and cooking equipment. All this section was said to be reflecting the current shift to suburban living and the increase of leisure among all ages.

IN SUM, our new toys seem generally lively and appealing. The warlike ideology of the comic-book was far from the glittering eleven floors of new toys I inspected. In fact, in the few war-minded toys on display, the trend seemed to be towards battles with hostile planets. Thus the chief feature of the Rocket Ship Control Board game was a pleasantly unspecified "Enemy Radar Sign." This is surely better than designating, as so many comic-books do, a particular racial group (now usually the Chinese) as the irredeemable villain. In my own childhood in England, my contemporaries and I used to be given sets of Zulus, armed with knobkerries, as enemies for our lead soldiers, and these we used to exterminate in rather large numbers with model machine guns (Vickers, water-cooled). Put beside this a constant reading of authors like "Sapper" (whose *Black Gang* opens with a masked Bulldog Drummond flogging a Jew), and you have our preparation, as a class, to deal today with the Mau Mau, as only a few gifted citizens, like Sir Oliver Lyttelton, really know how. For this reason I was not too happy with Pax, an enormously ballyhooed indoor participation game, which ran a room for itself on the eleventh floor of the McAlpin Hotel. The object of this game was (a) to defeat a "PAX MUSCOVITA—a Russian 'peace' dictated from Moscow," and (b) to achieve a "PAX AMERICANA, with the Americas united, with US strategic bases strung across the world." Here, the US player must "seek controlling positions in the Far East and Afrasia." Pax, however, proved an exception in its unhappy substitution of bellicosity for education. Most of the participation games were scrupulously objective when verging on the political scene, and the "SWAYZE" NEWS ALMANAC was distinctly up-to-date in politics, featuring questions on McCarthy, the Rosenbergs, the Bricker Amendment, and Beria. The educational level of these games is low, however, as compared with their European counterparts. More geography, more foreign languages, more racial and religious tolerance, might well be taught this way. As it was, the stand of participation games confronting me featured two distinctly redundant items: SUPERMAN and BE A TEXAS MILLIONAIRE. The worst of both possible worlds, I reflected, as I wandered out.

My path led in between an alarming-looking Gladiator Set and a 4-Tone Tom Tom. Park's Water Submachine Gun menaced me mildly—"1500 Shots Without Refilling." But on the whole all was at peace. Except for the singing commercials coming from the bike, of course, the talking telephones and police cars, and the ceaseless banal rain of distant parachutists. As I waved goodby to the Bannister Baby ("Huggable Lovable Tubbable") I noticed that the Jet-Rail Express was still roaring round its table. No one seemed to know how to turn it off and I believe they were looking for some likely youngster.

BANDWAGON

"I often tell my people that I don't want any fellow who has a job working for me; what I want is a fellow whom a job has. I want the job to get hold of this young man so hard that no matter where he is the job has got him for keeps. I want that job to have him in its clutches when he goes to bed at night, and in the morning I want the same job to be sitting on the foot of his bed telling him it's time to get up and go to work. And when a job gets a fellow that way he'll amount to something."—Charles F. Kettering, quoted in *Credit and Financial Management,* January, 1955.

C. B. DeMille is listening to taped speeches by General Van Fleet with a view toward using Van Fleet as the voice of God in Paramount's *Ten Commandments.*—*Newsweek,* March 14, 1955.

A proposed law in California would deny property-tax forgiveness to churches which advocate overthrow of the federal or state governments.—*Wall Street Journal,* February 2, 1955.

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CORRESPONDENCE

► Saving for Stevenson

SIRS:

After the election in 1952, many of your readers wrote in about their plans to start a small savings fund in order to contribute to Adlai Stevenson and the Democrats in 1956. I thought it was a splendid idea which I would follow too, but my good intentions never materialized. After the November elections of 1954, however, I did take action. In addition to my regular Christmas Club account, I started a small one to be put aside for the 1956 campaign. It would be interesting to hear how your other readers are progressing with their "Stevenson 1956 Campaign Contributions Funds."

EDITH GIFFORD

Brooklyn, New York

► The Blanshard Controversy

SIRS:

In his wretched little homily, "The Morality of Self-Respect (*NR*, February 28), Mr. Brand Blanshard does nothing more than to give another twist to that fatuous little aphorism, "it doesn't matter what you believe as long as you do the right thing." This may be really deep stuff to sophomores and bobby-soxers but to mature, sensitive, intelligent people vitally concerned with the problem of the meaning of human existence, this must come as hardly less than an insult. . . .

Judging from the tenor of this article, the term *holy* has no meaning for him at all, and until it does no discourse on ethics he will ever write can possibly amount to more than a sort of prayer-wheel of shallow ineptitudes like "self-respect," "love of integrity," "faith in his species," etc. To strip all mystery and sanctity from the good and say that it is essentially nothing more than what any damn fool can "plainly see" is only to wallow in pretentious jargon and get nowhere. . . .

I am probably safe in presuming that Mr. Blanshard considers himself a liberal insofar as that term may be applied to American politics. Now I may be mistaken but I get the distinct impression that this sort of superficial humanism underlies the thinking of a considerable majority of liberal intellectuals. If this be true, then the true defenders of the human spirit will have to look elsewhere to rally their forces against the onslaughts of the neo-barbarians in our midst.

KENNETH C. METCALFE

Seattle, Washington

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SIRS:

Dr. Blanshard is surely right that no religious position should be adopted simply because of its alleged support for morality. We may be in danger of a new kind of "rice Christians" who endorse the faith simply because it is supposed to render valuable service in defending civilization, opposing Communism, and upholding morals.

Perhaps the relation of deep religion to morality is not that of sanctioning and supporting existing moralities, but of challenging, upsetting, and transforming them. One badly in need of such challenge and transformation is the thin and inadequate ethic Dr. Blanshard recommends: Boy Scouts, admire your Scoutmasters! the rest of us: be reasonable! The events of our time, the emotional antagonism even so reasonable a man as Dr. Blanshard can display toward a subject he doesn't like (in his case, Kierkegaard) and the knowledge we all have of the fraility of our reason before our ego . . . all demonstrate that we seek a more profound faith than simply making "rationality" "respectable."

WILLIAM LEE MILLER
Smith College

Northampton, Massachusetts

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SIRS:

. . . Self-respect may keep a man from committing a crime, but only religion—the sense of man's relation to the law of God—deters him from committing sin. Were saints and martyrs sustained amid sufferings by their self-respect? Could they have borne them at all save for their love of God and their realization of their relation to Him? On the other hand, when Hitler determined to make Germany for the Germans, and so put to death five million Jews in gas chambers, was not his own self-respect enhanced by the deed?

Faithfulness to duty in matters of social welfare and intercourse with our fellowmen is inspired and sustained by something far less self-centered than self-respect or reason.

WILLIAM STETSON MERRILL

Oconomowoc, Wisconsin

► The Function of Money

SIRS:

. . . A substantial flaw in the Republican tax law of 1954 is that it enhances the worth of money as a commodity at the expense of its usefulness as a medium of exchange. This can be better understood when it is recalled that gambling is the ultimate use of money as a commodity whereas work for wages is the ultimate use of money as a medium of exchange. Historically, the Republican viewpoint is that money as a commodity is of more use to mankind than as a medium of exchange. That view is untenable for the most part and is some of the cause of the recent activity upon the stock market, though no mention of it has been made at the [Congressional] hearings so far as reports in the papers are concerned.

Allowing people who have a major concern in money as a commodity to determine our government's fiscal policies is as foolish as allowing people who like to drive at high speed to determine the automobile speed laws.

KARL HAARTZ

Andover, Massachusetts

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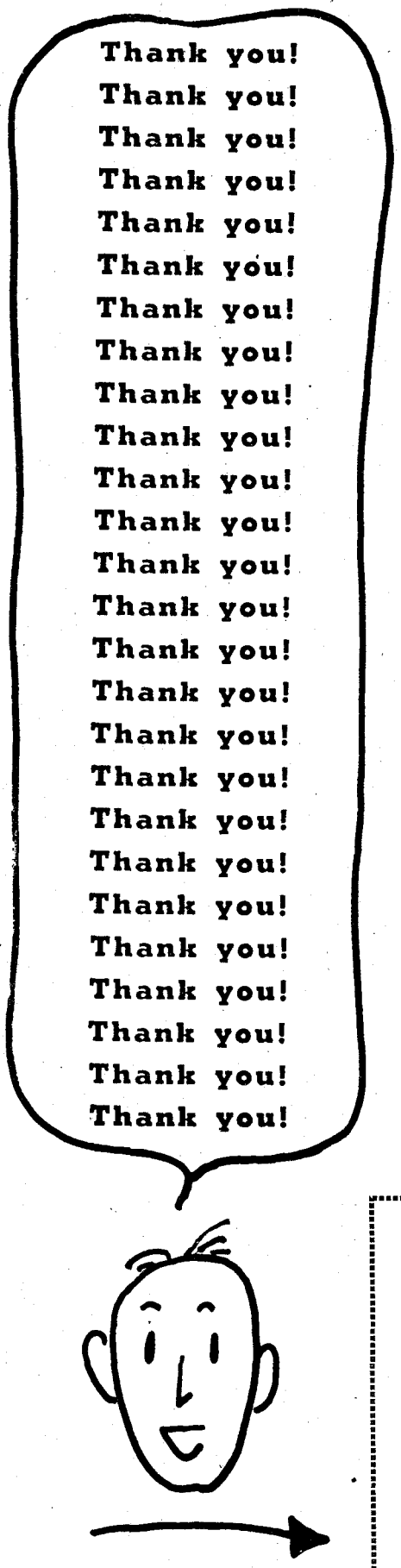

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